

### **REMARKS**

Claims 1, 3-16 and 19-25 are currently pending in the present application. Claim 24 stands objected to. Claims 1, 3-16, 19-22, 24 and 25 stand rejected. Claim 23 has been allowed. Claims 1 and 24 have been amended. Claims 2 and 17-18 have been previously cancelled without prejudice.

### **CLAIM OBJECTION**

Claim 24 is objected to because of informalities. In order to further prosecution of the application, the Applicants have amended claim 24 with language suggested by the Examiner and should now be allowable. Applicants respectfully request removal of the objection and allowance of claim 24.

### **CLAIM REJECTIONS – 35 U.S.C. § 112**

Claims 1 and 3-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

The Examiner alleges that claim 1 is indefinite for stating that "each outer edge being directly and fixedly connected to the outer skin via a respective intermediate element." The Applicants disagree with the Examiner, but in order to further prosecution of the application, the Applicants have amended claim 1 with language suggested by the Examiner and should now be allowable. Applicants respectfully request removal of the rejection and allowance of claim 1.

Claims 3-15 are rejected for being dependant upon Claim 1, but now should be allowable in light of the newly amended claim. Applicants respectfully request removal of the rejection and allowance of claims 3-15.

### **CLAIM REJECTIONS – 35 U.S.C. § 102**

Claims 1, 3-16, 19-22, 24 and 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Bergholz (US Patent No. 4,479,621).

A section 102 rejection is proper only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found-i.e., the prior art must teach every aspect of the claim. See *Verdegall Bros. v. Oil Co., of California*. 918 F.2d 628,631 (Fed. Cir. 1987; see also MPEP § 2131).

As for independent claims 1, 16, 20 and 24, the Examiner alleges that Bergholz teaches each and every element of the present invention, Applicants respectfully disagree. For example claim 1 recites that "each intermediate element being planar and having a long axis parallel to the long axis of said aircraft." The Bergholz reference does not teach this feature of claim 1. The other independent claims recite similar language. Rather, Bergholz teaches using braces (connecting rods) to support the decks (flooring) which are attached to stringers. Claim 1 does not employ rods, but rather intermediate elements which are planar in shape and are parallel to the long axis of the aircraft. This arrangement of planar intermediate elements allows the deck sections to diffuse the longitudinally, the forces imposed on their deck sections out to the skin of the aircraft. Bergholz is silent on the use of the planar intermediate elements.

Independent claims 1, 16, 20 and 24 are allowable and Applicant respectfully request their allowance. Dependent claims 3-15, 19, 21-22 and 25 all ultimately depend upon at least one of the above cited independent claims. Applicants also submits that the cited reference fails to teach or suggest many of the features recited by the dependent claims (as noted above), and, consequently, that these claims are independently allowable.

**CONCLUSION**

In the event this paper is not timely filed, Applicants petition for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fee deficiencies or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 50-2036 with reference to our Docket No. 59482.21840.

In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicants respectfully request that all the objections and rejections to the claims be removed and that the claims pass to allowance. If, for any reason, the Examiner disagrees, please call the undersigned at 202-861-1616 in an effort to resolve any matter still outstanding before issuing another action. The undersigned is confident that any issue which might remain can readily be worked out by telephone.

Respectfully submitted,

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